

8 February 1961

Dear John:

It occurs to me that somebody around here ought to sit down and write you a letter describing some of the more interesting developments which have recently been taking place. It may be that what I am about to say will be "old hat". However, in the event that some of your colleagues around Parnassus have not reported these items, I'll give it a try at the risk of being repetitious.

The first item of interest concerns the formalization of a National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC). This has been one of the more interesting things with which I have been involved since my return. Shortly after the report of Kirk's Study Group was issued, Mr. Amory asked that I work together with [redacted] in drafting a NSCID for a formal NPIC. This draft, which is now officially referred to as NSCID No. 8, moved with comparatively lightning speed through the Agency, the USIB, and the NSC. At USIB there was something of a "dog fight" as to who ought to control the NPIC, i.e., CIA or Secretary of Defense. Initially the Air Force was against setting up any kind of formal center, feeling that there was no urgency. However, when JCS and DOD favored a center, the Air Force went along and supported their view that it be under DOD control. The military agencies, except for the Army, voted for Defense Department control. The Agency, State, Army, and AEC voted for Agency control. NSA and the FBI abstained. The problem was presented to the NSC on 19 January and the outgoing President decided in favor of Agency control. It was "rough going" for a while until, as Bob A. reported, "the Director grabbed a pass on his own two-yard line and ran 98 yards for a touchdown." The Director was magnificent. He based his case on the past performance and professionalism of Art and his people. He received strong support from Kistiakowsky, who fortunately was briefed by Art on the latest holdings only the Tuesday before the NSC meeting.

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Needless to say, Art has been made Director of the NPIC. Our Director felt that it would be most politic to offer the job of Deputy Director, NPIC to the DOD. As a result, a Colonel Dave Parker, Corps of Engineers, was nominated by DOD and approved by the USIB to be the Deputy Director. Present plans are for the Army to contribute somewhere in the neighborhood of 100 bodies and the Navy and Air Force about 25 bodies each to the NPIC. It is still a little early to tell how large the NPIC will eventually be. However, the NPIC is scheduled to move into new quarters [redacted]

[redacted] some time around the end of the year.

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Another interesting development resulting from the report of Kirk's Study Group has been a stronger terms of reference for General Balmer's Coordination Staff. This staff will consist of 10 professionals and 6 clericals and will be charged with the responsibility for coordinating all kinds of knotty intelligence problems. The staff will be comprised of a senior colonel from the Army, Air Force and DOD, a captain from the Navy, a GS 15-16 from State and NSA, and a GS 15-16 from DDI, DDP, and DDS. Thus far, [redacted] have been chosen by General Balmer. The other positions should be filled very shortly.

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On 26 January the new President and McGeorge Bundy visited the Agency for a briefing by senior officials. Those present were, DCI, DDCI, DDI, DDP, Helms, Tracy, Sherm, [redacted] The meeting lasted 1½ hours, was very informal, and all hands were most pleased with the results. The President asked some very good questions, emphasized the fact that he read the CIB, expected to continue to do so, and suggested that the CIB contain more back-up information until such time as he developed a real appreciation of the different areas covered. The fact that the President took such a lively interest in the CIB has resulted in a real boost in the morale of the OCI people who have a hand in its preparation. Both the OCI and ONE people are absolutely tickled silly that the highest political authority is reading their publications. As an aside, the President smoked four cigars, complained of a slight cold, and asked McGeorge Bundy to follow up on a number of items which resulted in Bundy filling about three pages with notes.

The above items may also be of interest to Frank, and please feel free to pass these along to him as written or, if you prefer, orally. At any rate, please convey to him my warmest regards. I do not think that all of the above should have too wide a dissemination.

Incidentally, I should think that Mr. and Mrs. Frank W.  
must be delighted with the appointment of the Bruces to London.

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Please remember me to both Ethel and Sam.

Best wishes,

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